



ILLINOIS FAMILIES Now and Forever

Families by Foster Care, Adoption and Guardianship



From the DCFS Director

Bryan Samuels

By now, you have likely heard me talk about the importance of education. Recently, I was able to go beyond the plans to announce some very real and very positive action. On a stage with Jesse Ruiz, Chair of the Illinois State Board of Education and Arne Duncan, Chicago Public Schools CEO, we pledged to work together for the benefit of youth in DCFS care who attend Illinois public schools.

As a first step, DCFS will create an Education Passport to keep all of a child's school-related information in a database. This information will be kept current and will stay with the child regardless of placement. If a move does need to occur, we also announced an agreement with CPS to maintain the child's school of origin. Additionally, students in special education will receive extra support through literacy intervention, positive behavior models and tutoring.

Statewide, ISBE and the Department have asked the community organizations within Local Area Networks to re-focus their resources toward programs to reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions of DCFS students.

Like a good parent, it is our responsibility to be sure that our youth have every chance to be successful in school.

2004 booklet outlines foster care and adoption tax benefits

With tax season upon us, Illinois foster and adoptive parents should be aware of all the tax benefits available to them. Each year DCFS works with the Center for Economic Progress to produce the Tax Booklet for Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parents. Among the useful information are details on the Adoption Tax Credit, which provides as much as \$10,390 credit for 2004.

Applying the credit could result in a full refund of all taxes withheld.

This refund can add up to thousands of dollars to adoptive parents. Most adoptions made through DCFS involve children who qualify for the maximum credit. Any unused portion of the credit can be carried forward for five years. For example, if a tax-payer only uses \$3,000 of credit this year, the remaining \$7,390 can be used in the following years. Parents whose employers provide

adoption assistance benefits can exclude up to \$10,390 of income per child. To claim either of the above, adoptive parents must submit form 8839 with their tax return. If any adoptive parents did not take the credit or encountered difficulty in

obtaining the credit, they can call the Center for Economic Progress at 312-630-0284.

The Child Tax Credit of \$1,000 per child is another important tax benefit. Since adopted children generally may be claimed as

dependents, those under age 17 would qualify for the Child Tax Credit. In the case of foster children, remember they must live with the taxpayer for the full year to be claimed as a dependent.

Foster parents should also maintain records for expenditures made on behalf of foster children. The amount spent over the board

Continued on page 2

With tax season upon us, Illinois foster and adoptive parents should be aware of all the tax benefits available to them.

Tax Benefits

Continued from page 1

rate payments may be counted as charitable contributions, which may also reduce taxes owed.

The Earned Income Tax Credit is a refundable credit of up to \$4,300 for low-income families, generally those with one or more children. To qualify, a taxpayer must have earned income and a valid Social Security number. The credit is available to parents earning less than \$35,458 with investment income less than

By understanding all the tax benefits available, Illinois parents can be sure to maximize their refund at tax time.

\$2,650. No age requirement applies if the child is permanently and totally disabled. The credit is claimed by completing Schedule EIC and submitting with a tax return.

By understanding all the tax benefits available, Illinois parents can be sure to maximize their refund at tax time. Parents should discuss these benefits with their tax professional or use the Center for Economic Progress free tax preparation program. The 30 sites throughout the state of Illinois are listed in the Tax Booklet for Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parents. A copy of the 2004 version will be sent to all foster and adoptive parents listed with DCFS. To request a copy of this booklet, which also describes all tax benefits for foster and adoptive parents, please call 312-630-0284.

REGISTER today for Caregiver Institutes training for older youth

The DCFS Office of Foster Parent Support Services and the Office of Training will present a special day-long training for caregivers who are interested in learning more about "The Ins and Outs of Parenting Older Youth and Adolescents." The Caregiver Institutes will be presented on Saturdays in April and May in four locations around the state. Experts from DCFS and many local organizations will present on four topic areas designed to support caregivers as they parent older youth and prepare them to succeed as adults:

1. "It's My Life" as told by youth
2. Transition Skills for Youth Moving Toward Adulthood
3. Adolescent Development: Delays and Delights
4. Educational Resources and Support for Older Youth
5. Listening So Teens Will Talk

The Caregiver Institutes were created as an alternative to the weekend conferences previously offered. The streamlined format will still provide caregivers with practical information about working with older youth living in a family setting. Participants will also receive a wealth of "take-away" materials with community resources to use at home or share with other caregivers.

The Caregiver Institutes are open to all DCFS and private agency foster, adoptive, guardianship or relative caregivers. **Participants may only register to attend by calling the toll free telephone number for DCFS Registration at 877-800-3393.** CALL TODAY if you wish to attend, as there are only a limited number of seats at each site. You will receive a confirmation letter via e-mail or post from DCFS after completing the phone registration. Participants will be able to earn DCFS foster parent training credit hours. Confirmed participants must sign in at the training site on-time, and attend the full-day institute to receive credit.

There will be no provisions for childcare and no place for children to stay on-site. *Families must not bring children.* There may be limited funds available through the DCFS regions to reimburse DCFS-supervised families for childcare or mileage (not lodging) expenses to attend this training. Caregivers should follow normal procedures within their own region to check on reimbursement. Attendees from private agencies should contact their agencies to determine if they can be reimbursed for these expenses. The institutes will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. Complimentary lunches will be provided.

DCFS Region	Date	Location
Cook Region	Saturday, April 9	Juvenile Center 1100 S. Hamilton, Chicago
Northern Region	Saturday, April 23	Northern IL Univ. Holmes Student Ctr., DeKalb
Southern Region	Saturday, April 30	Season Lodge at Rend Lake, 12575 Gold Course Dr., Whittington, IL.
Central Region	Saturday, May 14	The Baby Fold 612 Oglsby Ave., Normal



Get on your marks for college scholarships

DCFS Scholarship

DCFS annually provides 48 college scholarships to youth who are currently under guardianship of the Department or who have left Department care through adoption or private guardianship arrangements.

Scholarship recipients receive up to four consecutive years of tuition and academic fee waivers to be used at participating Illinois state colleges or universities, a monthly stipend of \$444 and a medical card.

The purpose of the program is to ensure that those selected have the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree in four years or less. Applicants must have a high school diploma or GED by the end of the current school year. Scholarship Program Student Applications (CFS 438) are due March 30 and award announcements occur by April 30.

Education voucher grants extended

The Office of Education and Transition Services extended the

Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV) to September 2005.

The voucher is for a one-time payment up to \$5,000 to fund educational expenses, tuition, room and board, books and supplies not covered by financial aid.

To be eligible for the program youth in care or formerly in care must be:

- 16 – 22 years old
- attend a public/private four-year university, junior college, or a one-year vocational training program (in or out of state)
- moved to adoption or guardianship after age 16.

Youth who meet the criteria should request and complete the Education and Training Voucher Application and Agreement form with the ATV Academic Plan.

Contact The Office of Education and Transition Services at 309-693-5150 or 5415 N. University Street, Room 103 Peoria, IL 61614.

Actor Bruce Willis backs scholarship fund

Right before Christmas, actor Bruce Willis told a group of excited Washington DC teenagers about a new scholarship program called Fostering a Future. The scholarship will be a national program to help youth in foster care gain a college education. Capital One Financial Corp. backed the idea to the tune of

\$450,000 as a start. The Children's Action Network and the National Foster Care Fund (founded by Willis) will administer the program, setting application criteria and selecting recipients.

For further information go to www.fosterafuture.com.

DCFS partners help kids get to college

Finding a college and finding the funds needed to attend requires a lot of "homework." Fortunately, two programs are working with DCFS to help students (and their caregivers or caseworkers) navigate the college application process.

Introspect can advise students on how to pick a college, discover financial aid resources and assist with the application process all the way through the doctoral level. The agency is located in Chicago and focuses on Cook County, but can also advise youth around the state.

The organization primarily serves youth in care. However, young people who aged out of the system, left through adoption or guardianship, and even those who had never been in care can also receive assistance. For more information, contact Bernard Clay at 773-287-2290.

A second program called Project Success focuses on helping adults 19 or older attend the college of their choice. The program's service area includes Chicago and the south suburbs.

Project Success targets students from low-income households who are the first in the family to go to college. Yet, the organization also can assist students in other circumstances.

Project Success can provide career counseling, college search services and financial aid counseling. To get a referral packet for the program call 773-995-2371. Project Success also does presentations to groups of young people or the adults who support them.

College Info on the Web

College Board Scholarship search

www.collegeboard.org

College preparations, evaluation, selections and financing

www.wiredscholar.com

Everything you wanted to know about winning scholarships for college and more:

www.scholarshipworkshop.com

Federal Student Aid

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Illinois Student Assistance Commission:

www.CollegeZone.com

The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid

www.finaid.org/com

Orphan Foundation of America scholarships

www.orphan.org



Prepare youth for life with the new Casey Life Skills Curriculum

Many young adults long for the day they can make it on their own and some believe they are ready NOW. DCFS recently announced a new tool the help

youth get a clear understanding of the skills needed to succeed in adulthood and an accurate measurement of what they still need to learn. The Casey Life Skills Assessment is a program that can help caregivers, educators and social service providers teach “life skills” as youth make the transition to adulthood.

By July 2005, all DCFS regions will be trained to use the Ansell-Casey Life Skills assessment tool. The tool is a self-reporting format that youth can take on the Internet. It asks young people to evaluate themselves in six domains:

1. Daily living skills
2. Housing and community resources
3. Money management
4. Self-care
5. Social development
6. Work and study skills

Here is just a small sampling of the skills questions that help determine how prepared the youth is:

- Knows how to wash clothes according to the label
- Can develop a monthly budget for living on his/her own

- Can explain how to get car insurance
- Can explain how to establish and maintain good credit rating
- Asks questions to make sure he/she understands something someone has said
- Can explain the education or training needed for his/her career options

As youth go through the assessment they choose whether the statement is “very much like the youth”, “somewhat like the youth” or “not like the

youth.” Foster parents and other caregivers can also do the questionnaire based on their knowledge of the youth. At the end of the assessment, the youth will receive a score detailing what specific skills he or she has mastered and what skills remain to be attained.

The report also connects to curriculum that can help teach skills following an individual Life Skills Learning Plan. The entire curriculum is available on the Internet, so that youth and caregivers can access it at home or from a computer at a library or school. DCFS will also have copies of the materials available in the regional offices. All youth in care now or formerly in care can take the assessment and training. There is no charge. Go to www.caseylifeskills.org to register or talk with your child’s caseworker for more information.

The Casey Life Skills Assessment is a program that can help caregivers, educators and social service providers teach “life skills”...

2005 Reader Survey

Please help us make sure Families Now and Forever offers what you want to know. After circling your answers on **both** sides, simply fold, seal and mail the survey back. Or visit the DCFS website at www.state.il.us/dcfs to fill it out on-line. You may also fax both sides to 312-814-4131. Thank you in advance for your input.

CIRCLE: 1=GREAT interest 2=SOME interest 3=NO interest X=NOT applicable

Working Within the Child Welfare System

1 2 3 X Foster care rules/procedures
1 2 3 X Adoption rules/procedures
1 2 3 X Guardianship rules/procedures
1 2 3 X Governmental rules/legislation
1 2 3 X Licensing policy
1 2 3 X Obligations of foster parents
1 2 3 X Recruiting foster/adopt families

1 2 3 X Child and family teams
1 2 3 X Confidentiality
1 2 3 X System of care service network
1 2 3 X Integrated assessments
1 2 3 X Intake/Child investigation process
1 2 3 X Juvenile Court
1 2 3 X Resolving DCFS/agency disputes

other topics/comments: _____

Adoption and Guardianship

1 2 3 X Financial implications
1 2 3 X Advocating for the adopted child
1 2 3 X Obtaining community resources

1 2 3 X Subsidy agreement
1 2 3 X Rights and responsibilities
1 2 3 X Accessing free post-adopt services

other topics/comments: _____

Medical and Mental Health

1 2 3 X Depression
1 2 3 X Attachment disorders
1 2 3 X Eating disorders
1 2 3 X Self-esteem
1 2 3 X Fetal alcohol/drug exposure
1 2 3 X Asthma
1 2 3 X Diabetes

1 2 3 X Developmental disabilities
1 2 3 X Medically-fragile children
1 2 3 X Sexual abuse
1 2 3 X Resources for medical specialties
1 2 3 X Resources/info for dental services
1 2 3 X Resources for mental health
1 2 3 X Using the Public Aid medical card

other topics/comments: _____

Education

1 2 3 X Working with schools/teachers
1 2 3 X Special education services
1 2 3 X Scholarships

1 2 3 X Tutoring
1 2 3 X DCFS Education Advocates
1 2 3 X Education after high school

other topics/comments: _____

Age-related Topics

1 2 3 X Early childhood intervention
1 2 3 X Tantrums, biting, aggression
1 2 3 X Safety (home, playground, school)
1 2 3 X Pre-teen sexuality
1 2 3 X Teen sexuality

1 2 3 X Independent Living
1 2 3 X Services for teens
1 2 3 X Housing for transitioning teens
1 2 3 X Youth Advisory Boards
1 2 3 X Runaways

other topics/comments: _____

Family Life

1 2 3 X Behavior management/discipline
1 2 3 X Sibling rivalry
1 2 3 X Impact of placement changes
1 2 3 X Handling stress
1 2 3 X Family therapy/counseling
1 2 3 X Self-care for parents

1 2 3 X Foster/adoptive family networking
1 2 3 X Family traditions/activities
1 2 3 X Camps
1 2 3 X Arts, music, sports activities
1 2 3 X Travel
1 2 3 X Free services, products

Tell us how you feel about the regular features currently offered in each issue:

CIRCLE: 1=GREAT interest 2=SOME interest 3=NO interest X=NOT applicable

Regular Features

1 2 3 X Director's Message	1 2 3 X Family for Me photos of children
1 2 3 X Foster/Adoptive parent profiles	1 2 3 X Regional edition insert
1 2 3 X Tell It Like It Is question/answer	1 2 3 X Training schedule

other topics/comments: _____

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Please tell us about yourself:

_____ # foster children currently in your home	_____ # foster children previously in your home
_____ # children you have adopted	_____ # children you have taken guardianship of
_____ relative caregiver (yes / no)	_____ DCFS/agency staff (yes / no)
_____ private agency supervised home	_____ DCFS office supervised home

Circle your DCFS region: Cook Central Cook North Cook South Southern Northern Central

Would you be interested in receiving the newsletter by e-mail? Yes No _____

Would you be interested in reviewing the newsletter on the DCFS website? Yes No _____

What do you like best about the newsletter? _____

What do you like least about the newsletter? _____

Other comments: _____

Please offer your Name, Address and Phone Number, if you wish.



Get the facts on adoption from US Census stats

- 1.6 million children under 18 in U.S. households are adopted or 2.5 percent of all children (under 18) of householders.
 - 473,000 children age 18 or over of householders are also adopted, again representing 2.5 percent of all householder children in that age group.
 - 1.7 million households have adopted children. These households comprise 4 percent of all households in which the householder has children.
 - \$56,000 is median income for households with adopted children under 18, higher than those with birth children and stepchildren, \$48,000 and \$51,000, respectively.
 - 90 boys are adopted for every 100 adopted girls under 18. Conversely, among non-adopted children in this age group, the ratio is 106 boys for every 100 girls.
 - 16 percent of adopted children under 18 are Black. Additionally, 7 percent are Asian and 2 percent are American Indian and Alaska native.
 - 17 percent of adopted children under 18 are of a different race than the householder. This compares with 11 percent of stepchildren and 7 percent of biological children.
 - 13 percent of adopted children are foreign-born.
 - 48,000 of foreign-born adopted children under 18 are from Korea. Korea is the largest single-country source of such children, accounting for nearly one-fourth (24 percent) of them.
 - 82 percent of households with adopted children have just one adopted child, while 15 percent have two and 3 percent have three or more.
 - 43 years old is average age of householders with adopted children, about 5 years older than householders with biological children or stepchildren.
- Further information on the data in may be obtained on the website of the U.S. Bureau of the Census at www.census.gov.



Dominguez family wins national award

Manny and Diane Dominguez know the rewards that come from adopting older youth. Now they know the awards as well. The Dominguez family received a 2004 Adoption Excellence Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

“Mr. and Mrs. Dominguez have not only made an amazing contribution to bettering the lives of their seven adopt-

“...I worked so hard, we all cried and prayed / a home and a heart is something we’ve made.”

ed children, but they have also been outspoken advocates for improving the lives of waiting children throughout Illinois,” wrote Marilyn Panichi of the Adoption Information Center of Illinois in its nomination.

Diane Dominguez serves on the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council. In her role, she is passionate about the needs of older children and helping youth heal from the trauma of abuse.

A poem written by daughter Ruby summed up the feeling of family they have created... “These strangers, I now call mom and dad / they told me I was brilliant and not to be mad... I worked so hard, we all cried and prayed / a home and a heart is something we’ve made.”



Post Adoption/ Guardianship Hint

New way to find services in Cook County

The DCFS Website has a new feature to help post-adoptive or guardianship families find resources in the community. At this time the listing only covers Chicago and Cook County (other areas can still call the Information and Referral line at 800-572-2390.)

The Post-Adoption Resources Directory allows users to search for service providers by specific name, by geographic area or type of service needed. As an example, a caregiver could look for substance abuse counseling in Arlington Heights.

The result would show two providers, including for Spanish-speaking clients. The directory lists more than 50 types of services organized around the categories: Support and Linkages, Counseling, Educational Support, Financial, Medical and Legal Assistance and other types of services.

This information was compiled from surveys sent to post-adoption service providers in or near Cook County. The directory does not endorse any specific organization, but is a good place for caregivers to explore available providers.

Helping children understand adoption at different ages

Adoption is not a one-time occurrence, but an experience that spans a lifetime. What a child needs to know about his or her adoption will change as the child matures. To help caregivers know how to respond to questions and initiate discussions, the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) offers the following recommendations:

Children Pre-School (ages 3 to 5)

- Be concrete and simple. Use props such as dolls, simple drawings and books.
- Stay relaxed and factual.

Adoption is not a one-time occurrence, but an experience that spans a lifetime.

- Don't worry if children reject the explanation of being born to someone else for now.
- Begin talking about adoption right way, but remember to look for opportunities to talk about adoption in the future.
- Keep in mind that children usually feel good about being adopted at this age but will still have confusion.

Elementary Years (ages 6 to 10)

- Take advantage of your child's growing maturity and relate more details of your child's history and early life.
- Help your child understand that details from his or her past can be kept private or shared only with those they choose to share them with.

- For newly arrived older children, help them rehearse simple answers to inevitable questions.
- Respect your child's comfort level regarding public exposure of her adoption.
- Offer opportunities for your child to participate in celebrations, cultural fairs and school presentations - but don't insist.
- Bring up the subject of adoption casually but often.
- Help your child connect with other adopted kids and families.

Young Adolescent (ages 11-15)

- Expect that your child will have gaps in understanding or remembering information you previously provided, and clarify.
- Be particularly respectful when speaking of birth parents.
- Give as much specific information about your child's adoption as you can.

Older Adolescent (ages 16-22)

- Don't stop talking about adoption.
- Always refer to your child's birth parents with respect.
- Use news, movies, TV shows with adoption themes, school biology assignments, etc. to start a conversation about adoption.
- Share everything you know about your child's story.
- Join an adoption support group or seek counseling for help when needed.

Excerpted from NACAC's Adoption 101 Curriculum. See www.nacac.org for more information.

Adoption Advisory Council boosts membership

The Illinois Adoption Advisory Council was excited to add six new members at the December meeting. Included among the newest representatives are several adopted individuals, some of whom have gone on to also adopt children or serve in child welfare. Co-chairs Jim Jones and Elizabeth Richmond both expressed pleasure at working with so many more committed individuals who offer so much expertise and personal experience.



Kelm

Marianne Kelm is an adopted person representing Cook Central Region. She has years of child welfare experience and is a therapist at a psychiatric hospital. She has participated on adult adoptee panels, discussing her experiences with bi-racial and transracial adoption.



Cianci

Sue Cianci is an adopted person and an adoptive parent representing Northern Region. She also offers a professional perspective through her position as Assistant Director of St. Mary's Services, an adoption agency headquartered in Arlington Heights. Cianci has been in this field for over 14 years now and is also a trainer with the Infant Awareness Adoption Training Program.

Kathy Casey is an adoptive parent from Northern Region. She is also co-founder of Today, an adoptive parent



Casey

support group that has been around almost 16 years. Casey has been very active in the adoption arena in Illinois and New York for 22 years. She is currently on the Illinois Adoption Registry Advisory Council.

Joyce Loy is a foster and adoptive parent from Central Region. She has served as president of her local parent association for four years. She was also a member of the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Board for six years, helping families as a Foster



Loy

Parent Support Specialist. She is also Chairperson for the Rock Island Family to Family Strategy Team.

Bernie Spitz has been a foster and adoptive parent for 18 years in Central region. She has adopted nine children ranging in age from 11-33 and has one child by birth. She is a Foster Parent Support Specialist in the Champaign sub-region, and was a Lead FPSS for several years. She also serves on the Central Region Advisory Board. Spitz is a Foster Parent PRIDE trainer and a Master Trainer, while serving as a training coordinator at Parkland College.

Shannabeth Stein is a psychiatric nurse with Southern Illinois Regional Social Services in Carbondale. She assists adults and their families to manage the affects of mental illness. Her professional experience includes

providing psychiatric services to children. She and her husband live in Goreville.

Gina Miranda joins the council as an adopted person and child welfare expert. She is an Assistant Professor of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. Miranda's professional background included social work experience in child welfare. Her interests are in research,



Miranda

working with families involved in child protective services and court supervision, and making placement decisions for children entering and exiting foster care. She has also worked as a group therapist with teen girls, many of whom were in the foster care system.

Members to the Adoption Advisory Council are appointed by the DCFS Director. The Council aims to have representation of adoptive parents, professionals and adopted individuals. All meetings are open to the public.

Upcoming Meetings:

April 1 Chicago, 160 N. LaSalle. Room N505

June 3 Bloomington, Hawthorn Suites, 1 Lyons Court

Meetings begin at 10 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. Call the Office of Foster Parent Support Services for more information at 217-524-2422 or visit the Council's page on the DCFS web site at www.state.il.us/dcfs.

Tell it like it is: Readers respond

Families Now and Forever wants to hear the “real deal” on caring for children from those who know best – you! Here is what you had to say to the question: **What would you say to encourage someone you know to become a foster or adoptive parent?**

"...Don't be afraid to adopt an older child. Babies are great but an older child is just as loveable and generally speaking, you can skip the diaper stage. They may be a bit delayed but they are basically good kids and just need a parent(s) to love and care for them. Our child was 3 going on 4 when we adopted him. He's a lovable and loving child. So consider an older child."

Barbara

"If there is just a tiny difference that I can make while a child is young, so that there life is better when they become an adult with a family of their own, it's worth it!"

Jeanine, foster/adoptive mom in Peoria

The new question is...**What do you do to find emotional/social support in relation to your foster/adoptive family life?**

Additionally, Families Now and Forever is preparing a listing of local support groups for publication in an upcoming issue. To be included please send contact information by March 31.

Group name

Contact person

Contact phone

Meeting schedule (day/time)

Meeting location

Group description/format

You can contact me with your response by e-mail at vjames@idcfs.state.il.us , by phone at 312-814-6824 or by fax at 312-814-4131. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Vanessa James, Editor



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Printing: DCFS Print Shop

Purpose: To help busy families more effectively parent children currently or formerly in DCFS care. To bring them the best information from the most knowledgeable sources. To promote statewide teamwork in finding permanency for children.

Address Changes: Families must notify their licensing rep-resentative, who will notify DCFS. Agencies should change addresses of office locations or request staff copies through the Editor.

Illinois Families Now and Forever is published six times a year, bi monthly, and mailed to licensed foster parents, un-licensed relative caregivers, adoptive and guardianship families receiving subsidies, all DCFS staff and private agency staff as ordered. Material may not be reprinted in whole, in part or in any form whatsoever without permission from the Editor or DCFS. Opinions expressed by experts writing articles are no substitute for professional answers or opinions about a family's or child's specific situation. Consult a competent professional for answers to your specific questions.

A Family for Me

Frederick [C7339] Frederick, 9, loves music and has a beautiful voice. He likes to sing in church and to accompany the songs he hears on the radio. In school, Fred gets good grades, and his favorite subjects are history and science. After school, he likes to spend time outside – fishing, riding his bike, or playing basketball. When he comes in for dinner, he's always happy if cornbread or greens are on the menu.

His foster mom said Fred likes to help out at home. His teacher said he is very bright and learns quickly. His worker said Fred thrives on the praise he receives when he does a good job. The right family for Fred would provide close supervision and a structured routine. Your love and approval will mean a lot to him. He will benefit from a male role model, and will do best as the youngest or only child in the family.

Ricky [C6295] Ricky, 16, loves to work with his hands. His favorite activity is building model cars, although he can build things out of just about any material. When he's not working on a project, he likes to take time out to play basketball or go swimming. Ricky has a friendly disposition and enjoys spending one-on-one time with adults – especially his grandmother, who is in a nursing home.

His worker and teacher said that Ricky is a polite and likeable young man. His teacher said he has the ability to excel in school subjects that interest him. The family for Ricky be loving, kind, and patient. Ricky said he would very much like to be adopted, and he is hoping to find a family who will always be there for him.

Sirena [7430] Sirena, 12, is an active, curious young lady with a zest for life. She loves music and enjoys singing in her church choir. When she has free time, she likes to talk and play with her foster cousins. At school, Sirena is known as a hard worker. Her foster parent said she is well behaved. Both her foster parent and teacher said Sirena is mature and easy-going. Her worker said Sirena is loving and affectionate.

The parents for Sirena would be caring and supportive. They should also be healthy and active, to keep up with Sirena as she explores the world around her. Sirena is very social and said she'd like to join a family that has other children so she can play

with them.

Timothy [7471] Timothy, 12, is a loveable young man with a good sense of humor. He is eager to form a close bond with people who nurture him. Timothy has lots of energy and likes to put it to use by walking three miles every day. At school, he is a conscientious student who sticks with difficult tasks. At home, he likes to listen to music and play with toys that use his fine motor skills, such as blocks and toys with gears. Timothy is mostly non-verbal, and he understands best when people use simple sign language to accompany their requests. His worker said Timothy is friendly and enjoys smiling and hugging others. To be a parent to Timothy, you can be patient, loving, and supportive. You can learn sign language to better communicate with him. You can give Timothy a safe and stable home.

Trevien [7369] Get to know Trevien, and he'll win you over with his charm and sense of humor! He loves to play sports, especially basketball. When he's not working on his ball-handling skills or practicing his jump shot, Trevien likes relaxing outdoors. You can often find him down at the local fishing hole with a line in the water. Trevien, 10, also enjoys movies and hopes his first job is working in a movie theater. His worker said Trevien takes pride in his appearance. He is affectionate and likes playing with other children. The family for Trevien would be loving and patient, and nurture his interests. Trevien would like a family that will help him maintain contact with his brothers and sisters.

Emmy [6341] Emmy is a superb artist. She impresses everyone with her talent and her generosity, since she often gives her drawings as gifts. When she's at the art table, Emmy, 16, enjoys listening to music, primarily songs by the Backstreet Boys. Her other favorite activities include swimming and going bowling with friends. At school, she always looks forward to lunch – especially if chocolate cake or ice cream is on the menu.

Her teachers said Emmy is a loveable young lady who is happy and outgoing. She thrives on individual attention. The family for Emmy would be patient and committed to giving her the care and love she needs. Emmy would like to stay in touch with her grandmother. She wants a family "to be nice to me."

If you are interested in adopting one of these children or learning about other children waiting to be adopted, please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390, or see the AICI web site – www.adoptinfo-il.org.

Illinois Families Now and Forever
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100 West Randolph - 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

DO YOU KNOW A FAMILY FOR ME?

Call the Adoption Center of Illinois 800-572-2390



Emmy [6341]



Frederick [C7339]



Ricky [C6295]



Sirena [7430]



Timothy [7471]



Trevien [7369]

**Register for
Caregiver Institute
“Ins and Outs of Parenting
Older Youth and
Adolescents”**

Inside this issue:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Page 1 | Tax breaks for foster/adoptive families |
| Page 2 | Register for 2005 Caregiver Institutes |
| Page 3-4 | Teen education and scholarship feature |
| Page 5 | 2005 Reader Survey - clip and respond |
| Page 7-9 | Adoption and guardianship news |